

Prepared by: EWH
Date: 7/29/97

Weeks

WEEKS, SINCLAIR OH-277 174 pp. w/Index PRRCQ
Chairman, Finance Committee of the Republican National Committee,
1949-52; Secretary
of Commerce, 1953-58

DESCRIPTION: PART I: Political experiences prior to 1952 (incl. elective offices in city government, activities on the Massachusetts State Committee, responsibilities on the National Committee level, other political activities); business and military activities; general comments about growing party division (1940-1960); increasing interest in Eisenhower as a political candidate; Weeks' public statement concerning [Sen. Robert] Taft; the Commerce Department (incl. scope of responsibilities, establishing the Federal Aviation Administration, Weeks' appointment as Secretary of Commerce, termination of labor and material controls, liquidating the Inland Waterways Corporation).

DESCRIPTION: PART II: Weeks' involvement in the 1952 campaign (incl. comments about Douglas MacArthur's candidacy in Texas, responsibilities to the National Committee, money-raising activities); organizing the Commerce Department (incl. setting up administration, working with Eisenhower on appointments, the [Harold] Talbot Report on departmental structures); recruiting departmental personnel (incl. methods used, names of various appointees, merit vs. patronage appointments, adaptability of appointees to governmental posts, the Dr. Allen V. Astin affair); the Cabinet committee on transportation (incl. problems relating to railroads, make-up of the committee); committee dealing with the question of imported oil; results of other study groups (incl. formation of the Federal Aviation Administration, passage of the Interstate Highway Act of 1956, elimination of the Inland Waterways and the Reconstruction Finance corporations, implementation of the St. Lawrence Seaway Project, development of an information retrieval program for the Patent Office).

DESCRIPTION: PART III: Comments about the Taft-Hartley study group (incl. disagreements over the strike vote question, a U.S. News and World Report interview, protocol for handling interview requests); Inauguration Day activities; an anecdote and comments about Secretary Charles [E.] Wilson's use of stories and quotes; operating the Commerce Department; Foreign Commerce concerns (incl. extending reciprocal trade treaties, establishing Japanese quota controls, the question of expanding trade with Russia, the advantages of increased economic development, the relationship of commercial attaches to the Commerce Department); Eisenhower's attitude toward proliferating government agencies; domestic

Commerce concerns

(incl. general comments about the work of the Chief Economist and the Bureau of the Census, functions of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, activities of the Census Bureau, using outside consultants, general comments about Civil Service personnel, Weather Bureau projects, maritime operations, functions in the area of civil aeronautics, importance of the Bureau of Standards, public roads' programs); general comments about various personnel; Weeks' relationship with outside business organizations; the Cabinet meetings (incl. procedures, Eisenhower's view of the purpose of the Cabinet Secretaries, comments about Harold Stassen); comments about Richard M. Nixon; reactions to Eisenhower's heart attack (incl. government-as-usual attitude, Weeks' personal observations); general comments regarding Eisenhower and a second term (incl. the decision to run, the question of replacing Nixon on the ticket); the Sherman Adams affair; an anecdote involving Gov. Leverett Saltonstall and gift-giving.

NAME INDEX

[Columbia University Oral History Project, interview by Ed Edwin, Part I, February 2, 1967; Part II, April 13, 1967; Part III, April 14, 1967]